



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE HORSE IN AMERICA.

BY COLONEL THEODORE AYRAULT DODGE.

ALTHOUGH the earliest known remains of the ancestor of the horse are found in New Mexico, Wyoming, and Utah, there were, despite favorable conditions, no horses to be found in the Americas at the time of the arrival of the Spaniards. That the climate and other circumstances were well fitted for their development was abundantly proven by their rapid increase from the few individuals abandoned by or fugitive from the Spanish troops about the middle of the sixteenth century. This is a curious but not an isolated instance of such a failure in the equine race. The original horse of northern Europe is thought to have died out; he was at least entirely supplanted by better specimens brought by man from Africa and the East.

The Spaniards had long used for war the light, handsome Moorish horse, and no doubt it was the Barb which came with them to America. The big Flanders or Norman mount, which alone could carry the knight in full armor, had been driven out, together with that wretched bully, his master, by the constantly extending use of fire-arms. The Barb was of the same race which is largely represented in the English thoroughbred, and upon the latter all civilized nations now rely to improve their stock. The beginning of the thoroughbred was in the native English racing mares, coming of mixed Spanish and English strains, the former being descendants of the Barbs, and both being impressed by the Arabian blood imported by the Stuarts. Thus by the earliest and by subsequent importation the horse of the Moors has become strongly represented in America, both in its wild and civilized states.

It is not probable that the grade of animal brought over from Spain three hundred and fifty years ago was high; but the climate of South and Central America was well suited to the creature

whose original habitat was the sand of the desert, and it needed but a short space for large herds of wild horses to spring into being. These herds did not, however, very rapidly work their way north. It is always by man that the horse gets transplanted into colder climes. The Indians discovered his availability, and gradually domesticated him on our Western plains. There was no attempt among them to improve the breed ; but the grass the ponies fed on was nutritious ; the distance they had to travel to get their daily supply made them stayers ; the frequent call to escape from wolves made them fleet ; and their exposure made them hardy. These qualities have remained with the plains horse in ample measure. Many a pony has been lassoed and ridden a hundred miles on a stretch.

Colder latitudes are apt to stunt the wild horse. In Mexico it thrived better, and there, to-day, many points of the Barb, particularly the oval face and teacup muzzle, may be distinctly recognized. For the rest, however, the pony has everywhere lost the beautiful lines of his ancestor. The noble crest and fine throttle, the round barrel well coupled to the quarters, the tail high set on, are no longer present. Grass has distended the belly for many generations, and has permanently injured the middle-piece and coupling in structure and looks, if not in usefulness. But the legs are as fine as a stag's, and in those points which make for service and not for show he ranks well. No amount of exposure or abuse will kill him, while his intelligence is marked.

Many of the ponies of the Canadian Indians do not come from the plains, but are offshoots of the civilized horse dwarfed by generations of exposure ; and near civilization there is always some admixture of the plains with the domestic animal. But the horse of the plains remains a distinct creature. He is not the one which interests us at the moment. He has nothing to do with the horse of the Atlantic or Middle States, or, as he is called out among the cow-boys, the " American " horse.

Columbus, on his second voyage, in 1493, is known to have brought over a few horses. Cabeca de Vaca brought forty-two to Florida in 1527. But these all died out. De Soto's horses, abandoned on the Mississippi, bred on the plains and were lost to civilization. In 1625 Flemish horses were brought to New York ; but the better blood later imported has gradually eliminated the Flanders character, unless it has survived in what used to be

known as the Conestoga draught-horse. In 1629 horses were brought to the colony of Massachusetts Bay. Judging from their progeny, they were in all probability Cleveland bays and dray-horses.

The Canadian horse is a descendant of the Norman, imported shortly after 1600. The Norman is himself of a pure race (*i. e.*, one able to continue propagation in his own specific form), and possesses beauty of shape, great bulk, good endurance, and fine feet and legs. His docility has remained with him in his new home; he has kept most of his good qualities, lost bulk, and gained capacity for speed. The horse of the Eastern States exhibits traces of no particular race. While the richer planters of Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas, as well as the wealthy classes of New York and New Jersey, were able to import many and stanch thoroughbreds, the poor farmers of New England were fain to be content with the average specimens which they continued to bring over from time to time. Lack of blood and system in raising produced a haphazard breed of horses. These were distinctly useful for their purpose, remained sound in legs and feet on account of the dirt roads, and were good-tempered and able. But though the American was a good "all-round" horse, he did not improve without further infusion of blood. The South has always had a large proportion of thorough blood. There is a list of some three hundred thoroughbreds—horses carried on the Stud Book—imported from England from 1729 to 1840, and these went largely to the Southern States.

The good horse of the South shows more decided marks of thorough blood than his equal in the North. The common horse of the South is a weed; in the North he has substance. The draught-animal of the South is the mule, as it is oxen which do the very heavy work in the eastern country districts. As a rule, the western horses have come from the same sections as the population of the several Western States. Upon the breeds carried beyond the Alleghanies from the Eastern States there has been more or less impress made by imported thorough blood. Some heavy stock has been imported from France and elsewhere for the improvement, for draught purposes, of the native horses. But the cis-Mississippi horse has had his origin universally in the Atlantic States.

The trotting horse of the North, though great speed was originally due to thoroughbred Messenger, has drawn more largely on common strains than the racer of the South, and in the Eastern States the saddle-horse has never been cultivated as it always has been in those States where bad roads restrict wheeled locomotion. Where snow lay three months in the year, and roads were better cared for, the saddle-beast was not a *sine quâ non*, and until fashion has again brought riding to the fore there has been nothing worthy the name since the extinction of the Narragansett pacer. The form and capability of the horse always follow the demand. In the North this demand has been for a roadster; in the South for a saddle-beast. In each section the horse has responded to the call in qualities peculiarly suited to either duty.

Probably more and better horses are owned in America per thousand of population than in any other country, and the farmer or corner-groceryman, at least in the North and West, can and does afford to keep as good a roadster as the city nabob,—often a better one. While the average horse lacks the distinctive characteristics of race, he has exceptionally good qualities. American horses are, as a rule, sure-footed. There are more broken-kneed nags in cabs and livery-stables in England four-fold than here. Smooth roads and level meadows uniformly breed horses less careful how they tread than rough roads and stony pastures. The eastern granite soil produces safer steppers than the clay of the South. Our horses are of even disposition; one rarely sees a brute or a biting, striking, kicking devil in America. They are easily broken. In Kentucky the children ride the colts, often with only a stick to guide them. “I consider,” said Herbert long ago, “the general horse of America superior, not in blood or in beauty, but decidedly in hardihood to do and to endure, in powers of travel, in speed, in docility, and in good temper, to any other race of general horses in the known world.”

Except perhaps in the matter of trotting, the main distinction between the horse in England—as typical of Europe (for all Europe now is imitating England in matters equine)—and the horse in America has lain in the lack of system in breeding. Of very late years there has been considerable attention paid in this country to breeding, and the admixture of different bloods, which has produced “nondescripts with which America is overrun,” is

being avoided. That breeds have been kept separate in England is due to the fact that the raising of horses has largely been in the hands of great land-owners or capitalists, and the farmers who raised horses had their intelligence as well as their stud to profit by ; whereas in America, until of recent years, breeding of all but thoroughbreds was, with few exceptions, an entirely random affair. A farmer had a stanch mare. The only available stallion was in the neighboring village—perhaps on circuit. All he could see was that there were good qualities present in both, and he believed that these would be transmitted. Race was never dreamed of. Often the mare was not bred from until she was unfitted for work by something which equally unfitted her for breeding. No doubt the average produce of this lack of method may have been of excellent service in its way, but it was none the less “nondescript.”

In England the thoroughbred or racer, the hunter, the hackney, the cob, the galloway, the Shetland, the carriage-horse, the gigster, the Suffolk Punch, Clydesdale, and other cart-horses, the Cleveland bays and black Hanoverians, have all been kept distinct, and are regularly bred. One of the first things a horseman is struck with is the crisp distinction between the several varieties, in shape, qualities, and performance. In earlier days, in America, beside the imported thoroughbreds, a strain of which has always been kept pure, there were the Canadian Norman, the Narragansett pacer, the Vermont and the Conestoga draught-horses, somewhat later the Morgan, the saddle-horse of the South, and no doubt other more or less distinctive varieties. But these gradually became intermixed, and lost their several characteristics. All horses grew to look more or less alike. Within a generation greater care has again begun to be exercised to produce horses especially adapted to certain classes of work. Capital is put back of horse-breeding, and the results are already noticeable.

Much has been written about and claimed for the Morgan horse. By many he has been thought to be a product of the Canadian Norman. But it is probable that Justin Morgan, the founder of the breed, was of excellent, if not thorough, English blood. Few horses have been able to transmit their form and qualities as did this remarkable little animal ; and these were of the best as regards beauty, intelligence, speed, and endurance. Though lacking size and “quality,” Justin Morgan seemed to

possess all the virtues associated with the latter element. The Morgans have all but run out to-day, but there have been some deserving attempts to revive the breed, and for certain work they were unsurpassed.

The special product of American horse-sense is the trotter. So wonderful has been the result of our endeavors to produce a fast trotting horse that in true national style we have distanced the universe. We can easily place all the trotting horses of the world, as Colonel O'Kelly did Eclipse—"the American trotter first, the rest nowhere." The Orloff trotters brought over here from Russia a few years since, though handsome and apparently of great endurance, were so lacking in speed that racing with them became a farce. Not one of them could show a thirty-clip. To our dirt roads is partly due the speed of our driving-horses. A European turnpike would speedily use up a fast nag's legs and feet. Dirt roads are apt to continue in the country, and near cities there will always be a speeding-ground provided so long as we drive fast horses. Trickery on trotting-tracks has somewhat robbed this sport of its good repute, and Anglomaniya, seasoning the better breeding of the thoroughbred, has called up running as the fashionable pastime. But whoso has owned and regularly driven for pleasure a pair of fine trotters or roadsters to the typical American light rig, cannot fail to hope that the promised regeneration of the trotting-track, with all its collateral usefulness, may not be long delayed. The American roadster has no equal.

From the day, seventy years ago, when intelligent men laid their money against Boston Blue, who was matched to trot a mile inside of the then incredible time of three minutes, to the present year of grace, when the list of horses who have beaten 2:20 numbers many score, and the best trotting time is within less than half a minute of the best running speed, there has been such a marvellous advance in this problem, as well as in its corollary, fast road-horses, that it is doubtful whether there exists in the history of the horse, in any part of the world, its parallel. It took more than two centuries for the English thoroughbred to score a marked gain over his ancestor, the Arab. In a quarter of a century the trotter has made decidedly more marked progress in swiftness. The very anatomy of the animal has been changed by breeding. He is no longer what the original trotter was, but

a fine thoroughbred creature, with as many of the points of speed and wind as the greyhound. He has, in fact, been bred too fine. He has lost his weight-pulling capacity. It is a curious fact that while the running thoroughbred has, since 1750, gained at least three inches in height, if not a full hand, the trotting horse, in some forty years, has lost in size and weight perhaps half as much. The average of the speedy horses on the track are not capable of pulling a heavy Goddard buggy in good style, let alone a carry-all and four people, or a trap built on English ideas. Our track sulkies have got down to forty pounds and our road wagons to a hundred and twenty, which equalizes the matter somewhat, but this decrease in size is to be regretted, and is, to judge from the racer, by no means a necessary sequence of trotting speed.

But the endurance of the trotting-horse is as remarkable as his speed. Perhaps there is nothing in the annals of the horse superior to Trustee, Lady Fulton, John Stewart, and Captain MacGown trotting twenty miles inside one hour; Ariel, Black Joke, and Spangle, fifty miles in less than four; Conqueror, one hundred miles short of nine hours; and Fanny Jenks, one hundred and one in nine and three-quarters. Fanny Murray and Kate are also on record as having done their hundred miles in nine and three-quarter hours. And the habit of trotting heats, best three in five, instead of dashes, proves the ability to repeat of the American stock. The exertion called for by a mile trotted in 2:10 is quite as great as that by a mile run in 1:40.

In America we are going in the direction which speed always points out, and training and racing mere colts. The temptation to realize at an early age is, of course, great with breeders; but to see yearlings running and trotting in public races calls up a serious question. Two-year-olds and even yearlings have trotted at a speed which, forty years ago, was deemed impossible at any age. Yearlings have trotted quarters in thirty-eight seconds. It is claimed by breeders that this is natural speed; that the colts are not unduly trained or pushed, and that these trials are necessary to ascertain what colts have in them, and thus weed out those which will not pay to keep an extra year. But to produce a twenty-miler, or a horse which is sound and serviceable at twenty years, one would scarcely go to work after this fashion.

There is, perhaps, no establishment more typically American than Governor Leland Stanford's breeding-farm for trotters at

Palo Alto, California. It has no equal anywhere. The entire ranch covers some eighty-five hundred acres, and it is here that the university is to be located. There were in April, 1891, in stables, paddocks, and pasture some eleven hundred colts and horses, counting yearlings being broken to harness, and weanlings daily exercised on the "kindergarten" track. This latter is a small oval enclosure, perhaps three hundred yards in circumference, around which the colts are daily exercised, a number at a time, under instruction of a trainer, who stands in the centre with a whip. The colts are allowed only to trot. If one breaks, all are stopped and started again. Here the colts gain strength, knowledge of what is required of them, and steadiness. Everything on the ranch is of the best, from blood down, and the system of reasonable treatment is enforced on a large scale. In the paddock a colt may "fool" to the top of his bent; but the instant a man approaches him he is taught that he will be kindly treated and that he must act in a business-like way. Teasing or playing with a colt, other than "gentling" him, is prohibited. So far from a groom being allowed to strike a horse, not even an ill-tempered word, much less an oath, is permitted. The result is apparent in the uniform tractability of the colts, or, in other words, their serviceability and value. They need no "breaking," as usually understood. As yearlings they are already well trained, and have such confidence in their attendants that most of them can be harnessed and driven without difficulty.

The running horse has always been the special pet of the Southerner, who has never taken kindly to trotting. Up to the fifties many of the very best racers came from the Northern States. None came from the East, for the camp-meeting Puritan would not countenance racing—though, indeed, it may be asserted that racing has done more for the good of the community by improving the horse than camp-meetings have ever done for religion by improving man. And many were the notable contests on the track, where dollars by the hundreds of thousands changed hands, which antedated the war. But the less amicable interchanges of civil strife drove horse-racing from the minds of every one and transplanted all but the choicest horses, and, indeed, many of these, from training-stables to cavalry barracks.

In the palmy days Northern racers fully held their own. Black Maria, than whom no stancher ever stood on four pas-

terns, was a Jersey mare ; so was Fashion, by long odds the best racer of her day ; Eclipse was raised on Long Island. What finer trio can be named ? But the sport was more general in the South ; and up to the outbreak of the war Virginia, followed by Kentucky, gained more extensive, if not better, results in runners, as their race meetings were more frequent and rivalry was stronger. A warm climate is generally most favorable to the thoroughbred. The blue-grass region is his paradise. Here, on the lower Silurian limestone, all mammals thrive. Men and women are of noticeable size and beauty. Cattle are huge. A paddock full of yearling colts or fillies gives you the impression of a lot of two-year-olds. The weight and height of the blue-grass thoroughbred average considerably more than elsewhere—unless in California.

The relative speed and stoutness of the thoroughbred and the Oriental horse have been settled long ago. Two hundred years since, the fastest runners in the world were no doubt the Arabians. These are presumably to-day much what they then were, while their English progeny has vastly improved. This is due to more intelligent breeding and to tests on the race-course affording better selection of the fittest animals to breed from. Even with an allowance of as high as forty-eight pounds, the Arab has never been able to win an English race, while in Egypt, in the fifties, Fair Nell, who, though very well bred, was not proven thoroughbred, defeated all the best Barbs of Ali Pacha with ease, at all distances, on their own ground and on their own terms. It is clear beyond a peradventure that the thoroughbred possesses speed and endurance (or, more properly, *endurance at speed*, for such is his peculiar inheritance) beyond any other horse, as he has greater beauty. His feats of gameness and pace are unmatched. To rehearse some of the old performances is worth while. Bay Bolton, at York, in 1710, ran four miles in 7 minutes 43 seconds ; Eclipse, at Winchester, in 1769, in 8 minutes ; Lady Elizabeth, at Doncaster, in 1833, in 7 minutes 46 seconds ; Stockwell, at Newmarket, in 1854, in 7 minutes 29 seconds ; Lexington, at New Orleans, in 1855, in 7 minutes 19½ seconds ; Ten Broeck, at Louisville, in 1876, in 7 minutes 16 seconds ; while Black Maria, on Long Island, in 1832, ran her fifth four-mile heat in 8 minutes 47 seconds,—the whole twenty miles in 41 minutes 40 seconds ! Not only do

statistics show that the thoroughbred is superior to his ancestor, but that he is gradually improving on himself; and this present process of improvement, due exclusively to the rivalry of the turf, explains how he has gained on his Arabian cousins, who have substantially stood still for centuries.

Another comparison may be instituted between the marvellous performances which are related of ponies on the plains and the well-known records of thoroughbreds. That the latter are invariably proven, and the former rarely so, does not militate against the really remarkable feats of the bronco. But the allegation often made that the mustang can go further than the civilized horse, let alone the thoroughbred, is very wide of the truth. It is doubtful whether any wild horse ever equalled the record of the little pony which beat the mail from London to Exeter, one hundred and seventy-two miles, in twenty-three and a half hours, or of the galloway who ran three hundred miles at Newmarket in 1754 in sixty-four hours and twenty minutes; while it can safely be claimed that no wild horse ever went one hundred miles in nine or ten hours. And one thing is especially to be noted: we not only have no "record" of time and distance, but we never learn whether the great feat quoted killed the bronco; whereas the feat of the thoroughbred, to be of value, must be accomplished without material injury. Any game thoroughbred ridden until he stops will fall dead. Not so the bronco. But the latter may be ruined, and one hears of the performance, not its results. It is very rare that the great performances of thoroughbreds permanently injure them.

The comparative stoutness and speed of English and American thoroughbreds is not a fruitful topic. The matter is so evenly balanced that the different methods of running, weighting, and timing horses produce statistics out of which one can prove arithmetically anything, actually nothing. In order to pronounce definite judgment between breeds or races of horses, there must be a perceptible difference. Between the thoroughbred of England and America the advantage is imperceptible. English turf records have been authoritative only since the St. Leger, Oaks, and Derby were established, a trifle over one hundred years ago. Those of the American turf are more recent. But excellent and perfectly reliable records were published in *The American Farmer* from 1818 to 1830, since when official

records have been kept. But from the records no superiority can be shown.

Though the odds of percentage, climate, and accident are all against success in sending American horses over to compete on the English turf, we have no reason to be ashamed of our performances and trophies, from the days of stanch Prioress to Iroquois, winner of the Derby. A time-test will not serve. In America we race from start to finish. Many an English cup has been won where the stanchest horses have not extended themselves over a distance. But, judging from all facts, while there is perhaps no valid ground for asserting that the American thoroughbred is a better stayer than the English, or more speedy, it can be maintained with certainty that he does not fall behind him in any sense. On time-tests alone the American stands higher. It is to be regretted that friendly rivalry has not brought Englishmen over here with their studs as it has with their yachts, and that it is only Americans who have crossed the ocean to test their horses. This, however, is natural enough, for the home of the turf is the mother-country.

It is probable that the average of English breeding is more careful; until lately it certainly has been, and it has extended over a longer period than our own. It is also probable that the English trainers are more expert, certainly on their own soil, than ours, at least so far as preparing for mere speed and game is concerned. But a thoroughbred from a racing-stable rarely has manners. It is scarcely doubtful that the higher class of English jockeys are the more expert. America has produced no Archer. It is not intended to refer to the average of English jockeys. Many of these men who can find no occupation at home drift over here, and are in the same category with the majority of the English grooms in American cities. But the jockeys who rise high in their profession in the larger field afforded by the English turf are artists, probably superior to any we have produced.

As fox-hunting is in America only an exotic, so we have no equivalent of the English hunter, a creature bred for his particular work, and no doubt at his best the most perfect of horses—bar none. Many of our well-bred horses turn out superb timber-jumpers; many are up to weight; but this alone does not insure success after hounds. There is too little variety in the obstacles of our country to make clever hunters. As a rule,

thoroughbreds are flyers rather than high jumpers. Many of our horses have proven to be flyers, jumpers, and stayers under very severe tests. In leaping-contests we have done wonders. There has been no parallel to the high jumping at horse shows here and in Canada during the past few years. A number of horses have cleared six feet six of timber, while the abnormal height of seven feet has been cleared by one, if not more. These are not guess-work measurements, but accurately levelled, and the jumps have usually been made by artificial light and in cold blood. There are some traditional jumps in England, but no records equalling this. Still, mere high jumping by no means makes a hunter. These same horses were no better than many others after hounds. It will take years of cross-country riding in America to make either horse or man equal to the best English model. Our climate is neither suitable to the sport—hunting over snow scarcely sounds attractive—nor is the country such as to make it what it is in its true home in the midland counties. Too few men call for hunters here for us to expect to find the bone, courage, manners, cleverness, or strength of the English hunter, which is, without question, the animal best adapted to any and every use—except mere draught—to which a horse can be put. There is no work off the track for which he is not fit and which he is not able to do better than any other horse.

But we have none the less created in many sections of America a basis of very good sport. The obstacles are, as a rule, stone walls in Massachusetts; in New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, timber; in Canada, both. Hedges and water are rare. The stone walls are not high; the timber very stiff, but cleaner jumping. Probably no county in England affords such high timber-jumping as some localities regularly hunted here. Where the pace is not severe, the coarse horses do as good jumping as the thoroughbreds; trotting-stock produces fine jumpers; but in hunts where the pace is forced blood must be had. Hunting men here now ride American horses almost exclusively. Even the high-priced English and Irish horses, many of which have been imported, have done less well over our timber, and many have failed utterly. It seems to be the prevailing opinion that they showed endurance, but less jumping power than the American-bred horses, which, on the other hand, cost but a third of the

money. Perhaps more good hunters come from the vicinity of Geneseo, N. Y., where is one of the oldest hunts in America, and from Canada, than from any other places at the present moment. Part of the thorough blood in this particular hunting-stock came from the South during or after the war. But (and this is a big word) there is in most places a plentiful lack of foxes. Our perseverance in hunting drags is certainly commendable. In Geneseo, Reynard has been longer cultivated and is more at home, and the drag is less essential. *Fox*-hunting there is common; elsewhere exceptional.

While saying everything in favor of English racing methods, and excepting always English hunting (for in this finest of all sports our British cousin is alone and incomparable), there is no doubt whatever that America furnishes the best saddle-horses. The type of hunter is so indelibly stamped on the Englishman's soul that his road-horse partakes too much of a similar character. In our Northern cities unreasoning imitation of the English type brings about the same result; in Canada a more natural process of imitation does the like; and riders, in their demand for a horse that can "gallop and jump," forget that south of Mason and Dixon's line—if there still be such an antiquated landmark—there are everywhere better saddle-beasts than any part of England can boast of to-day. Since the *manège* has been discarded from the old country, with lace ruffles and buckled shoes, the pendulum has swung too far away from the niceties of the saddle, and much that is admirable has been lost. The Briton recognizes but two gaits on the road—the trot and canter. The latter is uniformly *taboo* among men, and he is thus reduced to a simple trot. Our fashionables follow suit. Now, there is no more exhilarating, nobler gait than a square, open, sharp, elastic trot; nor, indeed, is there a better every-day wine than sherry. But to do nothing but trot on the road is on a par with a man's drinking nothing but sherry and discarding every other wine because sherry is good enough.

In the South it is usual to train horses to special gaits. Any horse can possess several distinct and well-settled gaits if a man will study to keep him pure in their performance. He may "walk," Southern style, or rack, five to eight miles an hour, single-foot up to twelve, trot from six to fifteen, and "canter all day in the shade of an apple-tree," or at a twelve-mile gait, at will. No

man gallops on the road. The climate of the South naturally leads riders to prefer the easier gaits. But these are entirely consistent with an admirable trot if the rider desires it. And it is undeniable that the Southern thoroughbred saddle-horse is by long odds a finer mount than anything which mere imitation of English style can produce in our Northern cities. This is no place to discuss riders. But the fact is undeniable that we have at home the *perfect saddle-beast*, and that our Anglomaniacs will not use him. When one is brought east (and many are), he is at once despoiled of his fine gaits and delicate training, taught to lug on the bit, and allowed only to trot, or on rare occasions to break into a gallop. Let us hope that time will cure this. To the English we of the North are indebted for very much in athletics; especially for the new and capital habit of saddle-work. Let us look about us for the best means of keeping it up, and not despise what we have at home. Our own stock furnishes our best hunters. Let us stick to our own saddle-beasts as well, and learn from the Southerner what is best in his equitation, as shown us in the saddle-horses he can send us.

This superiority was well shown during the war in the cavalry service of North and South. For fully two years our cavalry could not compare with that of the South. Not only were our men poor riders, but the horses were not broken to saddle, and between them, as a rule, we made a sorry mess of it. But by-and-by we learned; good leaders came to the fore; our supply of animals lasted longer, and our cavalry became more than a match for the enemy. Old troopers will remember with pleasure the splendid mounts of "raider" stock which were occasionally picked up in Virginia, and how superior they were to the horse supposed to be quite fit for mounted service because he had "U. S." branded on his shoulder.

The Southern saddle-horse is of a distinct breed, having a marked strain of thorough blood. He may have originated in the Narragansett pacer. Some of these horses are known to have drifted to Tennessee. In Kentucky they speak of the thoroughbred racer, the thoroughbred trotter, and the thoroughbred saddle-horse. The first alone is of strictly thorough blood. The shape, gaits, and action of each are absolutely distinct. The racer and trotter we are familiar with. The saddle-horse has a much shorter, crisper, quicker gait. He does not extend him-

self. He is bred for the rider's comfort ; and while he will gallop with a fine, open stride, and jump well, his peculiar value lies in the heritage of what we in the North call artificial gaits, but what to the Southerner, who rides fifty miles to our one, are the natural gaits. These rackers, or running walkers, can cover from six to eight miles an hour with such absolute freedom from motion to the riders that the feat is often performed of carrying a glass flush-full with water a mile or more in the saddle without spilling a drop. In the heat of summer this ease is essential where the saddle takes the place of wheels, and the gait is an exquisite one at all times. The horse does not tire on these gaits, though there is a general impression in States where these animals are not inbred that rackers or "walkers" cannot go a distance. In the South they go every day and all day. This suffices.

There is no special type of carriage-horse in America, but high prices are paid in the cities for handsome teams, and not even in the Bois de Boulogne can one count more superb matched pairs than are seen turning into Central Park on a fine afternoon in the season. So far we have avoided the ponderous family coach in which the dowager duchess takes her airing along the Serpentine ; nor are the equally ponderous horses known ; nor, indeed, the elaborate and heavy harnesses which cover many a straight shoulder and weak quarter. But for up-headed, high-stepping, speedy matched pairs from fifteen and a half to seventeen hands in height, which show quality in every point, our metropolitan cities have no superiors. We have found it of advantage to import English coachmen to teach us "style," as the best of them have really done ; but the material was here ready to hand, and the means are poured out with lavish hand.

Perhaps the old-time coaching was as good a test of driving-horses as can be found. The annals of English coaching are well known. The testimony of Mr. Herbert, above quoted,—and he is a good witness, being an Englishman and one of the very best horsemen of his day,—is to the effect that, taking roads into consideration, the style of work which used to be done on the post-coaches in New England and New York, principally by Vermont horses, has never been approached elsewhere. This opinion was given from an almost unequalled experience, during the prime years of coaching, between 1825 and 1831, on all the flying-roads of the day in England. And he, moreover, adds that these Ver-

mont mares are incomparably the likeliest from which, by a well-chosen thoroughbred sire, to raise the most magnificent carriage-horses in the world.

We have in America no equivalent of the big brewer's dray-horse of England, nor, indeed, use for him. The exceptional specimen of this overgrown animal is kept for purposes of show rather than utility. The average one is slow and unable to do anything like the proportionate work of a lighter horse. Of late years sufficiently large animals have been bred for heavy city teaming from stock imported into the Middle and Western States. They lack somewhat the flesh of the English horse, but are able, speedier, and more enduring. For lighter and quicker draught work, such as is especially called for by our express companies, probably there exists no better animal than the Eastern horse or than many of the horses now bred for such purposes in the West, not infrequently a cross of the imported Percheron with native stock. For a certain class of heavy work there is no such horse in the world as the Percheron. The omnibuses of Paris and the diligences all over France are drawn by these powerful animals, and at a good, if not rapid, gait. Within their limits they are not equalled. We have nothing nearer the Percheron than the Eastern express teamster.

Perhaps the most useful of creatures in a country of smaller means than ours is the pony. Until very lately no attempt has been made to domesticate him here. Shelties are now being raised in Iowa, but principally for children's use. For the multifarious smaller duties of town and country alike, where light loads only are to be hauled, it is odd that their utility has not yet been recognized. Pound for pound the pony can vie in endurance with the ass, and has speed besides.

The ass has never been domesticated in America. Except for breeding mules, or as an occasional pet, he is unknown. He belongs to the day of small things, which we, still over-rich in raw material, have not reached. And yet he is an extraordinary little fellow. In Spain or Italy, not to instance Africa or the East, the donkey, gauging his value by the work he does and the food he eats, is worth at least a dozen of the average population. He can give any horse odds of two to one, and distance him in every day's work.

His progeny, the mule, is, however, one of our most valued

institutions. In the South he is indispensable. We are wont to prize the very big mule, and many stand seventeen and eighteen hands, can pull extraordinary weight, and thrive on exposure which would literally kill a horse. But abroad, where economy in feed is more closely studied, the smaller mule is found to do proportionately greater work, to live longer, and to be more generally useful. During the Civil War the Quartermaster's Department found mules, on the whole, decidedly preferable to horses for economy, efficiency, health, and durability, though it took six mules to do the work of a four-horse team. The question of relative inducement to profanity in their management need not be broached.

The capacity of the country to respond to an extraordinary demand for horses was well shown during the war. "With reference to animals alone, the Quartermaster's Department supplied six hundred and fifty thousand horses and four hundred and fifty thousand mules. In the third year the armies in the field required for the cavalry, artillery, and trains one-half as many animals as there were soldiers."—(General Vincent).

THEODORE AYRAULT DODGE.